Who may file a Title VI complaint?

A Title VI complaint may be filed by any individual who alleges he/she has been subjected to discrimination or adverse impact under any Iowa DOT program or activity based on race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, income status or retaliation.

What information is included in a Title VI complaint?

A signed, written Title VI complaint must be filed within 180 days of the date of the alleged act of discrimination. The complaint must include the following information.

- Your name, address and telephone number. If you are filing on behalf of another person, include their name, address, telephone number and your relationship to the complainant (e.g., friend, attorney, parent, etc.)
- The name and address of the agency, program or organization that you believe discriminated against you
- A description of how, why and when you believe you were discriminated against. Include as much background information as possible about the alleged acts of discrimination
- Your signature

What if the recipient retaliates against me for asserting my rights or filing a complaint?

A federal-funds recipient is prohibited from retaliating against any person because he or she opposed an unlawful policy or practice, made charges, testified, or participated in any complaint action under Title VI. If you believe that you have been retaliated against, immediately contact the Iowa DOT's Office of Employee Services-civil rights section.

What will the Iowa DOT do with my complaint?

Upon receipt, the Iowa DOT's Office of Employee Services' civil rights section will determine which agency has jurisdiction to handle the complaint. If the Iowa DOT does not have jurisdiction to handle the complaint, it will be forwarded to the appropriate agency. To file a Title VI complaint, you may obtain the necessary forms by contacting the civil rights coordinator at the phone number listed below.

Mail the Title VI complaint form and discrimination complaint consent/release form to:

Iowa Department of Transportation
Office of Employee Services, civil rights section
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, Iowa 50010
Phone: 515-239-1921
Fax: 515-239-1175

This brochure is designed to help you understand your rights under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

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TITLE VI and you ...

Protecting your civil rights is good business.

It is Iowa DOT policy to ensure that no person in the United States of America shall on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs and activities.

Federal and state laws prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran's status. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission at 800-457-4416 or Iowa Department of Transportation's civil rights coordinator. If you need accommodations because of a disability to access the Iowa Department of Transportation's services, contact the agency's affirmative action officer at 800-262-0003.

Iowa Department of Transportation

"Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes or results in racial discrimination."

- President John F. Kennedy, in his message calling for the enactment of Title VI, 1963

What is Title VI?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the federal law that protects individuals and groups from discrimination on the basis of their race, color and national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. However, the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) reference to Title VI includes other civil rights provisions of federal statutes and related authorities to the extent that they prohibit discrimination in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

Iowa DOT's Title VI policy

Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 and other nondiscrimination authorities, it is the policy of the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) that discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or income status shall not occur in connection with any of its programs or activities.

The Iowa DOT's efforts to prevent discrimination will address, but not be limited to, a program's impact upon access, benefits, participation, treatment, services, contracting opportunities, training opportunities, investigation of complaints, allocation of funds, prioritization of projects and the functions of planning, project development, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, and research.

Authorities

The two main authorities enabling Title VI implementation, compliance and enforcement are the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987. However, other statutes, laws, regulations, executive orders, and the United States Constitution provide guidance for the effective execution of the objectives of Title VI.

These include:

- Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- Uniform Relocation Act of 1970
- Executive orders 12898 and 13166

Title VI compliance

Title VI compliance is a situation where the Iowa DOT has effectively implemented all the Title VI requirements or can demonstrate that every good faith effort has been made toward achieving this end.

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 302, the FHWA's primary recipient is the state highway (transportation) agency. In Iowa, the Iowa DOT is the primary recipient. The Iowa DOT and its subrecipients and contractors, are all required to prevent discrimination and ensure nondiscrimination in all programs and activities whether they are federally funded or not.

Subrecipients of federal assistance include cities, counties, contractors, consultants, suppliers, universities, colleges, transit agencies, and regional and metropolitan planning agencies.

Programs covered

Federally assisted programs include any transportation project, program or activity for the provision of services and/or other benefits. Such programs include education, training, work opportunities, health, welfare, rehabilitation, housing or other services, whether provided directly by the Iowa DOT or indirectly through contracts or other arrangements with other agents.

What discrimination is prohibited under the Iowa DOT's Title VI program?

Discrimination under the Iowa DOT's Title VI program is an action or inaction, intentional or not, through which any intended beneficiary, solely because of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, income status, or retaliation, has been otherwise subjected to unequal treatment or impact under any Iowa DOT program or activity.

Discrimination based on the grounds referenced above limit the opportunity for individuals and groups to gain equal access to services and programs. In administering federally assisted programs and activities, the Iowa DOT cannot discriminate either directly or through contractual or other means by:

- Denying program services, financial aid or other benefits.
- Providing different program services, financial aid or other benefits, or providing them in a manner different from that provided to others.
- Segregating or separately treating individuals or groups in any manner related to the receipt of any program service or benefit.
- Restricting in any way the enjoyment of any advantage or privilege enjoyed by others receiving any program service or other benefits.
- Denying person(s) the opportunity to participate as a member of a planning, advisory or similar body.
- Denying person(s) the opportunity to participate in a program through the provision of services, or affording the opportunity to do so differently from those afforded others.